



Angélica Infante-Green
Commissioner

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Enclosure 4a
July 23, 2019

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TO: Members of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education

FROM: Angélica Infante-Green, Commissioner *A. Infante*

RE: **Times² STEM Academy – Charter Renewal Conditions Deadline Change**

OVERVIEW

On January 29, 2019 The Council on Elementary and Secondary Education voted to renew the charter of Times² STEM Academy (Times²) for 3 years, with four sustainability conditions. These conditions set specific deadlines for 1) providing a detailed plan, approved by RIDE, demonstrating how the charter will meet the needs of all students and fulfill its mission, and 2) providing evidence of plan implementation. Two additional conditions specified the requirement of providing ongoing progress reports for the duration of the term and completing a financial audit for FY19 that is free of all significant deficiencies and material weaknesses.

DEADLINE EXTENSION FOR PLAN SUBMISSION

Times² and RIDE staff have been communicating with school leadership and the board of directors since January in order to support and monitor the charter's progress in meeting the conditions. In May 2019, Times² Board of Directors elected a new president whose sudden passing in June has created a need for an extension of the deadline of the first renewal condition. The proposed new deadline is August 9, 2019.

RECOMMENDATION: THAT, the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education move to amend the renewal of the charter of Times² STEM Academy for 3 years, with sustainability condition #1 deadline change from June 30, 2019, to August 9, 2019, as presented.

Enclosed Documents:

The following documents were provided as part of Times²'s renewal and have been updated to reflect the extension of the plan submission deadline.

- Commissioner's Recommendation Overview: including an overview of the charter.



Times² STEM Academy

Overview of Commissioner's Charter Renewal Recommendation

Recommendation: 3-Year Renewal, with Sustainability Conditions

Renewal Recommendation Overview:

Summary of Recommendation	
Recommended Action:	The Commissioner recommends that the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education move to <u>renew</u> the charter of Times² STEM Academy for <u>3 years</u>, with sustainability conditions. These sustainability conditions are due within the 2019 calendar year, may require an interim site visit, and may require the charter to report directly to the Council on its progress in meeting the conditions.
Recommended Charter Term:	From SY2019-20 through SY2021-22
Recommended Sustainability Conditions:	<p>The time-bound sustainability conditions address the charter's specific issues and deficiencies found throughout the renewal process. In addition to meeting the expectations of each renewal condition, Times² may be required to present its progress in meeting the conditions to the Council. The Commissioner, with the advice and consent of the Council, reserves the authority to take action, as outlined in the charter school regulations section 2.5 (200-RICR-20-05-2.2.5), should the charter not meet the expectations of the required renewal conditions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Within the next six months and no later than August 9, 2019, Times² must identify a change manager and provide a detailed plan demonstrating how the charter will meet the needs of all students and fulfill its mission. The plan must be approved by RIDE and must include:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Systems and structures to identify, support and serve special education students.b. Systems and structures to identify, support and serve English Learners including meeting all stipulations found in the agreement between the US DOJ and PPSD for serving ELs.c. Rigorous academic progress monitoring for all students across school levels, among administrators and board members.d. Consistent and integrated STEM education across all grades.e. Aligned curriculum to statewide standards for core content areas in all grades.f. Systems and structures to review recruitment procedures and results to ensure efforts reach all students in the sending district.g. Decision-making and communication protocols and procedures, that have the support of staff, to address stakeholder complaints and human resource management for both teachers and administrators.h. If the charter plans to contract with another provider for student support, or other services, Times² must establish a time-bound agreement with the provider(s) that clarifies all management, operational, student support and other services:<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. The agreement must specify costs for services provided, whether in-kind, annual contracts, hourly, salaried, etc.2. Within the next twelve months and no later than December 31, 2019, Times² must provide evidence of plan implementation including action steps taken, documentation, and results.3. Ongoing progress reports will be required for the duration of the charter's term. The reports must detail Times²'s progress toward satisfying each condition and must include applicable evidence. The progress reports will be due thirty days after the end of each fiscal quarter, beginning with Q3FY19.4. Within the next twelve months and no later than December 31, 2019, Times² must have a complete financial audit for FY19 that is free of all significant deficiencies and material weaknesses.



Overview of Commissioner's Charter Renewal Recommendation

Recommendation: 3-Year Renewal, with Sustainability Conditions

<p>Recommendation Key Points:</p>	<p>Academic Performance</p> <p>The school's academic performance has been mixed, with the outcomes of the most recent year resulting in a School Performance rating of Approaches, and a School Comparison Rating of Approaches. The school received a 2-star rating due to low achievement and growth, approaching expectations for School Performance. For achievement, the school earned 1 point (out of 4) for Math (13% proficient) and ELA (20% proficient). This triggered an analysis for the School Comparison sub-indicator, which includes three criteria (Sending District Comparison, EL Progress, Growth). The school approached expectations on all criteria, resulting in an overall school comparison rating of Approaches. Since the school approached expectations on the school comparison sub-indicator in the most recent year, it received a Tier 3 final designation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school approached expectations in the Sending District Comparison. The school did not reliably (accounting for standard error) outperform the weighted average proficiency of its sending district in either subject. • The school approached expectations for EL Progress. The school earned 2 ELP points (out of 4), its ELP Index score was 78 (out of 110), with 59% of ELs meeting the progress target. • The school approached expectations in growth, earning only 1 point for growth (out of 3) in ELA (growth index of 0.78 out of 2) and 2 points in Math (growth index of 0.87 out of 2). <p>Organizational Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school approached expectations on organizational criterion 2.3, Equity and Access, due recruitment efforts that do not address all populations in the sending district. • The school did not meet expectations in criterion 2.5, Board and Leadership Quality. There was not evidence of regular academic progress monitoring, nor clear or well-understood systems for decision-making. There was a vote of no confidence in the Executive Director given to the school's Board by the school's faculty in June of 2017. <p>Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Special Education</u>: After an investigation by RIDE, the school was found to be in violation of implementing a student's IEP in 2017-18. While the specific violation has since been resolved, there is not a clear system in place to ensure IEP services are provided with fidelity and consistency. • <u>EL Services</u>: While the school had initiated a request for technical assistance from RIDE to correct their EL services, the United States Department of Justice conducted a thorough review of Providence Public Schools' EL programs and services in early 2018. This review found several conditions of the district's EL programming that violate Section 1703(f) of the Equal Educational Opportunities Act. The settlement agreement outlines several matters that must be addressed across PPSD schools, including Times². • <u>Educational Program</u>: During the site visit, there was a lack of STEM integration across all grade levels, and the elementary scheduled resulted in limited science instruction on a weekly basis. The middle/high school visit encountered students without coherent schedules. Additionally, there was not evidence that the school has aligned curriculum to statewide standards for all core subjects at all levels. • <u>Financial Management</u>: Over the course of the term, the charter has struggled to provide required financial reports on time, and the school's auditors identified several significant deficiencies and material weaknesses, which have carried over through fiscal years.
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Times² STEM Academy

Overview of Commissioner's Charter Renewal Recommendation

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Charter Overview:

Current Charter Overview			
Charter Type	District	2017-18 Grades Served	K-12
School-Year Opened	1998-99	2017-18 Enrollment	726
Current Charter Term	2014/15 – 2018/19	Authorized Enrollment	727 (grades K-12)
Enrolling Communities	Providence	Location(s)	Providence (Elementary and Middle/High Schools are co-located)
Network Status	The charter moving forward will be considered a network charter with two individual schools and will receive separate accountability ratings		

School Mission and Model	
School Mission:	The mission of Times ² STEM Academy is “to develop intellectually curious and capable young people who are selfless contributors to the local and global community, and who aspire to be ethical and compassionate leaders. Through a rigorous and innovative academic program in math Science, and technology, in combination with the liberal arts, Times ² Academy affords it diverse student populations those experiences, skills and values that will prepare them for purposeful contribution to higher education and STEM related fields and meaningful personal growth.”
School Model:	Times ² began as an afterschool and Saturday enrichment program and its program continues to focus on developing minority students into STEM sector leaders and innovators. Times ² is a district charter school, composed of two levels, the Elementary School (grades K-6) and the Middle/High School (grades 7-12). While the levels are co-located in a connected building, the levels operate independently with separate school principals, deans and teachers, as well as separate entrances, and office staff.

Overview of Charter Performance Ratings:

The following table depicts the charter's performance according to the Charter Performance Review System. For more detail on performance ratings, please see the charter's renewal report and annual performance dashboards.

Times ² STEM Academy					
Indicators		SY14-15	SY15-16	SY16-17	SY17-18
Academic	(1A) School Performance	NR	M	M	A
	(1B) School Comparison	-	NR	NR	A
Sustainability	(1) Financial	-	M	M	M
	(2) Organizational	-	M	M	A
	(3) Compliance	-	DNM	A	DNM
Renewal Process Tier		Tier 3. In-Depth Renewal Process			
Updated Tier Designation		Tier 3 (Academic, Organizational, Compliance)			

Ratings Key	
E	Exceeds Expectations
M	Meets Expectations
A	Approaches Expectations
DNM	Does Not Meet Expectations
NR	Not Rated
NA	Not Applicable